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Religious Hunger

BY FRANK DURWARD ADAMS

As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. Psalms 42:1.

INVARIABLY, when a theme like this is proposed, some one challenges the basic assumption. It is denied that there is any such thing as a genuine, inborn religious hunger. What we call the religious hunger, we are told, is merely the result of superstition and inertia. Our ancestors for hundreds of generations have been beguiled by priestcraft into believing and doing many curious things. We have been taught the existence of supernatural beings whom we must in some way placate and please, or run the risk of dire suffering in this world and endless pain in the world to come. This has been reiterated generation after generation, and in varying phrase and symbol.

These dogmas, they say, are all false. There are no supernatural beings to be coaxed and coddled, and there is no future world to be afraid of. But we have been taught this so long, and with such a show of authority, that we now react subconsciously as if it were all true. We formulate and recite our creeds, we set up our altars, we build our churches, and we go through the motions of worship—all through sheer inertia. The momentum of all these thousands of years, during which our ancestors were doing the same irrational things, just carries us along in the same old groove. And this tendency to react in that way we have mistakenly called the religious hunger. It is simply the reflex of an immemorial habit.

Probably no one in this assembly believes that. Those who do believe it, actually and sincerely believe it, do not trouble themselves to go to church. And

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in that they are perfectly consistent. So any attempt to refute the argument is not for the sake of reassuring our own doubting minds, but rather to suggest an answer when the challenge is thrown down to us.

You will agree that habit has had something to do with bringing many of you here. The presence of some of you may be almost wholly due to the fact that you are in the habit of going to church. But on the other hand, some of you may have had to fight the habit of *not* going to church. It may have been quite a struggle to get yourself started. Curiosity, the urging of someone else, or the desire to begin forming a new habit, may have contributed to your motive in coming; but it can hardly be said that inertia had anything to do with it. We shall have to probe a little deeper.

Imitating Religion

There is another thing which the proponents of this theory have not been able to explain. The iconoclasts—known variously as infidels, rationalists, agnostics, atheists—are driven by the selfsame urge—this gnawing, persistent thing we call the religious hunger. How do we know this? Because they find themselves forced to do the very things which they condemn in the rest of us. They preach their negations with all the zeal and fervor of the evangelist. They write books, publish magazines and distribute tracts, more often than not at much personal trouble and expense, in the interest of what they call "debunking" the public. They organize societies, and hold meetings at which much enthusiasm is often displayed. I have heard so-called rationalists expound their negative gospel with a depth of feeling that would put many a Christian preacher to shame. They carry on a propaganda which, in every practical respect, is so like the missionary activities which they roundly denounce that the typical "man from Mars" would be puzzled to discover any difference.

Why do they do all these things? Just because they cannot help it. They are driven by that deep-rooted, innate impulse that we call the religious hunger. Denied the food which most of us have received for its satisfaction, this craving has turned upon itself and feeds upon negations. For the same necessity is laid upon us all. If we are to enjoy any measure of spiritual content, we must devote ourselves to some cause which we are persuaded is calculated to increase the sum of human happiness. The man who denies God, and preaches that denial, does it because he has somehow made himself believe that his unbelief, when shared by others, will make all those who share it happier than they now are. The man who has faith in God, and strives to share that faith with others, is motivated by the same resistless urge. This is one of the strange paradoxes of our human nature.

We recall with what a flourish of trumpets it was announced that the Russian revolution in 1917 had done away with religion in that land forever. Churches and their treasures were confiscated, altars were overthrown, ikons demolished and priests sent into exile. At last the people were to be free from the superstition which had enslaved them from time immemorial. Nor can we withhold a great throb of sympathy with those who wrought this foolish destruction. The established religion of old Russia was a benighted, crude and cruel thing. Their savage resentment, when they at last found power in their hands, was a natural and inevitable reaction. It was natural, too, that they should judge all religion by the caricature of it in the priestcraft to which they were accustomed.

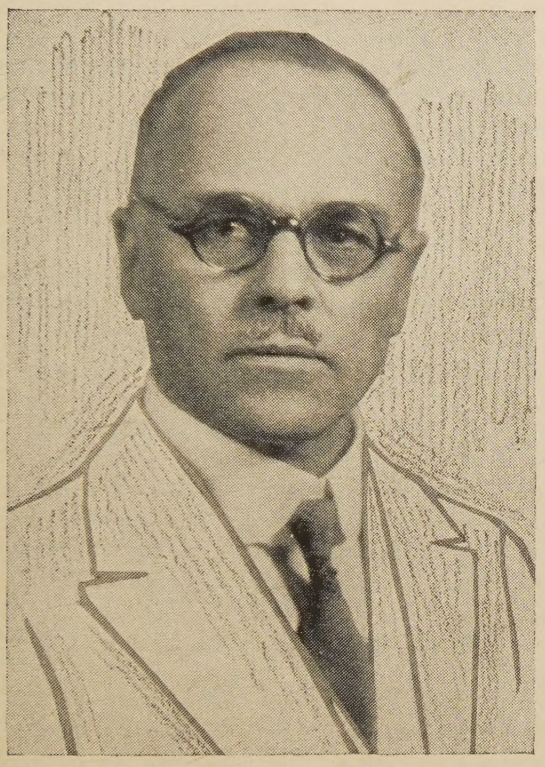
Reckoning Without the Soul

But they reckoned without their own souls. When the wild iconoclasm, which served for a time to fire and inspire their spirits, was spent, they began to be aware of a void in their lives, a great and gnawing hunger. They wanted faith. They needed religion. And they began seeking it out, in spite of repressive laws and threats of punishment. And just lately we have been thrilled by the story of a new kind of religious movement in the city of Moscow. "Red Chimes: The Church of the Toilers," it is called. A letter from the Protestant preacher in charge of this movement declares that there is now more searching and thinking on religion in Russia than in any other part of the world. The tide has turned, and the inborn impulse is asserting itself again. In response to that impulse this community pulpit has been established in Moscow. They are forbidden to advertise, they cannot charge admission to their lectures, they are not permitted to take subscriptions. But a small notice on the door of the church—it is a beautiful old Byzantine church holding a thousand people—is sufficient to fill it twice every Sunday. In the morning there is a regular religious service according to the Russian orthodox cult; in the evening a forum in which every shade of opinion has an equal right to express itself. The building is unheated. More than half of the audience must stand, for there are no more seats. But they linger there from six o'clock until midnight to listen to the discussion of subjects, all of which turn in some way upon the question of religion. Their souls are being fed, albeit upon crumbs and fragments of truth.

Religious Literature Growing

Another rather convincing proof of the reality of the religious hunger is found in the multitude of books now coming off the press, books dealing with every aspect and phase of religion. The world has never seen anything like it. Let those explain the paradox who can. The church as an institution is admittedly in the doldrums, and earnestly seeking ways and means of arresting and holding the vagrant attention of men. Many are solemnly prophesying the disintegration of the church and all it stands for. Yet at this very hour is being produced a religious literature unmatched in quantity and quality by any previous land or time. And this literature is being eagerly bought and read by increasing numbers of people. There ought to be a lesson for the church in this somewhere, if only someone were astute enough to discover it.

It is significant that the trend in this writing is quite definitely away from the caustically critical tone of a very few years ago. The conclusions of modern science and scholarship have been frankly accepted. Thoughtful men have now set themselves the task of reconstruction on larger and firmer foundations. Walter Lippmann is an outstanding example of this. His book, "A Preface to Morals," marks an epoch in religious thinking, and no one who would keep abreast of the current can afford to overlook it. I am not sure that he anywhere uses the expression "religious hunger"; but one cannot read the book without



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perceiving at once that his whole undertaking is premised upon it. He begins on the opening page by classifying into three groups those who have ceased to believe in the religion of their fathers. He is not concerned with those who are content with the old orthodoxies, but only with those who have broken away from the ancient moorings and have not been able to come to rest in any other haven. These, he tells us, are, first, the proudly defiant. They are still in the fighting stage of their revolt, and they don't care who knows it. This type can be recognized anywhere by the truculent tone and temper of their talk. The second class are the indifferent. These, I suppose, are the most numerous at the present time. Nothing religious, at least conventionally religious, interests them. They are preoccupied with things—automobiles, golf, clothes, bank balances or "moonshine," maybe all five of them.

The third class, says Lippmann, are those who feel that there is a vacancy in their lives. He believes that their number is small, though it may be increasing, and his book is written with this class only in mind. Granting the correctness of his classification, it seems to me that he has overlooked one rather large group; namely, those who have ceased to believe in the religion of their fathers, yet have found something far better and more satisfying. No doubt a show of hands on the question would reveal a good many of that sort in this very congregation. But it is perfectly obvious that in Lippmann's third class, those who feel a vacancy in their lives, we find the only hopeful field for our endeavors. They are not essentially different from any of the others, but they have arrived at a more advanced stage of awareness. They *know* that they are hungry for a religion that will satisfy their souls. They know that their craving and unrest is the consequence of irreligion; or, perhaps, not irreligion so much as an utter lack of religion. They almost envy those of their acquaintance who can accept the naive and incredible dogmas of an impossible orthodoxy and be happy in them. They long for the equivalent of that happiness, but without its intellectual obfuscation. They know a faith like that has steadying power, and with all their hearts they long to find it.

The Objective Desired

Now what is the state or condition of mind which this hunger seeks as its objective? Is it intellectual certainty? Is it that state of mind in which the individual, by a careful process of reasoning, has arrived at conclusions which satisfy all the demands of his rational nature? In a measure, perhaps. There are certain types of mind in which this quest of intellectual clarity is the chief concern. But they are not many, and they are never satisfied. Religion cannot be reduced to dogmatic finalities, no matter how much reason and logic we may bring to bear upon it. We must learn to be content with statements of faith which do not violate the highest sanctions of the mind. Is dogmatic certainty the desired goal? I think not.

There may be a kind of religious hunger which an iron dogmatism will satisfy. This may find satisfaction in an extreme fundamentalism, which undertakes to answer all questions and solve all problems without any tax upon the mental faculties. Persons of this sort need a dogmatic religion. Dogmatic religion has a useful function to perform in meeting their need. But the sort of people I have in mind, the kind Lippmann is dealing with in his book, are repelled rather than attracted by it. The probabilities are that that is the very thing from which they have long since revolted. Or is it a kind of quietism that we are seeking? I have already mentioned a rather biting criticism on that score. Most Protestant churches, declares this writer—and he scores the liberals the hardest of all—will not let the hungry seeker enjoy any peace and quiet in worship. Instead of helping him find relaxation of mind and soul through pageantry and symbol, the idea is to convince him of something, usually that the doctrines of the other camp are all wrong. But

let the average Protestant minister try to meet this need by a bit of ritual and a few lights and symbols upon the altar, and immediately there is a tumult.

All of these elements enter in, in some measure. But no one of them, and no combination of them, can satisfy the hunger of those who feel this vacancy in their lives. The thing which our modern religious temper has missed, or rather the thing which it has not yet succeeded in recapturing, is the conviction that the individual soul is of some account in the great scheme of things. Is it not so? What is it that gives one a sense of worth and well-being? What is it that makes life worth the effort of living? What is it that drives one on from day to day, perhaps against desperate odds, perhaps when it would be so much easier to throw up the whole struggle? It is the feeling that somehow it makes a difference; the feeling that somehow one is a cog in a machine, a cog that must function if the machine is to do its work. The cog may be very small, lost in a bewildering mesh of other cogs little and great. But if the efficient operation of the whole machine depends upon the proper placement and performance of that one tiny cog, what a difference it makes in one's conception of the whole relationship!

It is this identical certainty that the modern heart is craving. It was found in the old theologies. Man and his god had intimate and close relations, albeit a relationship of trembling and fear. The individual soul was of consequence; so much so that the whole theory and system of sacrifice and atonement were calculated to bring the estranged soul and the offended deity into a condition of reconcilement. Is not the orthodox Christian doctrine of the atonement based upon that very assumption? The human soul, the individual human being, was of so much worth that a god was slain to redeem it! But this feeling vanished with the breaking down of the old dogmas. Along with the rejection of an impossible system of dogmatic theology went also the rejection of this idea of the value of the individual human soul. In the pungent words of William James, we have thrown out the baby with the bath.

Old Conceptions Are Gone

The old universe was a cozy and compact affair, with man as its central fact and figure. The earth was a little disk of dirt; hell was a cavern just under our feet; heaven was a blue vault, resting like an inverted bowl a little distance above our heads. In the ceiling of this vault were studded the stars, and the sun and the moon made their daily and nightly sojourn across the arc of it. Just above this vault, and reached by means of windows which were opened to let the rain come down, was the abode of God, full of angelic glory and majesty. Where is that universe now? Gone, vanished, with the archaic theology that was postulated upon it. The earth is now but one of countless atoms of matter whirling through infinite space. Hell, heaven, the abode of God—where are they? The imagination stands appalled at the contemplation of such immensity. Now, vastly more than in the days of the Psalmist, there is meaning in that wondering cry: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him?"

Yet this elusive, uncaptured thing is the very heart of the message of Jesus, and of every other great prophet who has spoken the good tidings of God. Justice and mercy for the poor, exploited and downtrodden souls of Israel was the burden of Hosea's message, and the message of Amos, Micah and Isaiah. Did not Mohammed abolish the practice of putting unwanted girl babies to death? And did he not relieve the intolerable conditions of the women of the desert tribes? Did not Abdul-Baha plead for the abolition of poverty and care for the needy? Babes and women and poor folk were human beings, and precious as such. The closer we get to the heart of all great souls, the simpler, more direct and godlike we find them. What a pity that we have lost ourselves so often in mazes of theology and mists of speculation, when the beating heart of it all is so close, and so winning!

God's Fatherhood

Thus we find, when we have re-made our anchorage, that it is the simple religion of Jesus into which we have come. Its keynote is the worth of the individual and the significance of the individual human life. He called his disciples from among the poor and lowly. He had compassion upon the multitudes, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. He paused in his teachings about God to take little children up into his arms. He protested the cold-blooded policy that would make a man of less value than a sheep. Why, he said, the welfare of his children is the Father's first and greatest care. How can we doubt his willingness to clothe us when the lily of the field is so gorgeously arrayed? Shall food fail his children when the birds of the air are being fed?

How often we speak words with little or no realization of their meaning. The very truth we are seeking, and the certainty of it, are contained in the confession of faith we took upon our several lips this morning, the universal Fatherhood of God. If that is true, why need we seek further and afar? Here in the first and only essential article of our faith we have all that the hungry, bewildered modern heart is craving. God is our Father, and the universal Father of mankind. To a father every child is indispensable, every child is of infinite worth. When we have become wise enough to understand the meaning of that supreme affirmation, and brave enough to govern our lives according to *all* its implications, our hunger will be appeased, our church will find its life by losing it in a great evangel, and the kingdom of heaven will draw nigh apace. For truths like this must be pragmatically proved. Affirmation and argument alone are of little value, and almost without persuasive power. A Persian poet has put it all in a single stanza:

> No one could tell me what my soul might be;
> I searched for God, and God eluded me;
> I sought my brother out, and found all three,
> My soul, my God, and all humanity.

The Sanctuary and the Sea

By Edwin Holt Hughes*

Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary. Psalm 77:13.
Thy way is in the sea. Psalm 77:19.

WE are gathered here in a religious service far out upon the ocean. In a sense we are turning the sea into a sanctuary. Our songs have been accompanied by the music of the waves; our prayers have been set to the solemn vastness of the waters; and even now our thoughts may be distracted or quickened, as you may be pleased to interpret your moods, by the breathings of the elements that carry us and the pulsings of the engines that push us over the miles of waste. For the first time some of us are worshiping in public fashion on the sea. Hitherto we have gathered to our appointed places and have kept the holy day in buildings formally dedicated to the service and worship of the Almighty, and in company with those friends of the spirit who share more or less fully our thought of God and sympathize more or less closely with our manner of worship. Now we are met in this union service; "union" not simply in that we come together while representing many faiths and several races, but for the reason that we are all under the spell of the great deep. At the risk, therefore, of seeming to be too utterly appropriate, let me urge a lesson out of the ancient Psalm.

The Psalmist writes: "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary"; and then within near distance of this word he writes again: "Thy way is in the sea." Thus he uses the same language about the sanctuary that he uses about the sea. This fact is too striking to be quite overlooked. The sanctuary was so like the sea, and the sea so like the sanctuary, that God's way was in them both. It was as if the roar of the sea made music in God's house; and as if the reverence of God's house spread itself over the sea. If the thought is new, this is a good time to accustom ourselves to the novel lesson.

Going to Church

To most of us there would be a large difference between going to church and going to sea. One day we see the crowds taking their way to the place of worship; the next we see the crowds moving to some vast pier to enter the vessel that is soon to loose from her moorings and glide out into the deep. The second case may arouse anxiety, interest, even solemnity; but few of us could say that it had ever made us think that the voyagers were going, if they so wished, to a divine service. Between the situation of those who sit in the pews of the sanctuary and the situation of those who plough the great waters in ships, there seems to be a difference as wide as the sea itself.

It is, therefore, something of a surprise to find that the ancient writer uses the same language in reference to the sea that he uses in reference to the sanctuary, and all in the one Psalm. Any change of translation would not alter the essential meaning of the two passages, and there would still be room for the implied comparison. This Psalm unites the sanctuary and the sea by saying that the divine way is in them both; the book of Revelation unites them by banishing both. You will remember that the apostle, shut out from his friends by the sea that rolled about the island of his exile, saw a vision of the future country. In that country there were to be no separations; and so he wrote: "And there was no more sea." But let us not forget, also, that the same apostle in the same book records a vision of the Holy City and, seeing that its borders were filled with the sense of the divine presence and that a special place of worship was no longer a need, he wrote: "I saw no temple therein." As such likenesses as these are presented to us in the Bible, we need not hesitate to consider some comparisons between the sanctuary and the sea.

I

First of all, there is in both the contact with the same element of mystery. It was this sense of likeness that led the Psalmist to write in another place: "Thy judgments are a great deep." This was to say that even as our view of the ocean was hidden both by the depth and distance of the waters, so our view of God is limited and we see but slightly into the height and depth and breadth of the divine being. If men come into the sanctuary and hear and think of the mysteries of our faith and then go out saying to themselves, "It is all very strange!" let them not fail to express the like sense when they stand upon the shores of the ocean or ride upon its bosom. The sanctuary and the sea both stand for the mystery of power. The worshiper in the sanctuary says, "Power belongeth unto God." The thinker on the sea approaches the same reverent conclusion. The power of the sea seems worthy of the Infinite. There is something naked and direct about it all.

What we call secondary causes are not prominent on the deep. We seem to be near to the primary source of power. The waves toss these thousands of tons as if the ship were a plaything. Beneath us on the bottom of the sea the knowing ones say there are vast mountains and deep valleys and wide plains, surmounted and filled and covered by ponderous weights of waters. Sink a piece of wood far down beneath the waves, and its fibers will be knitted and compressed so tightly that the work of the axes is made difficult. Sink a piece of iron, and the pressure of the waters will force the slightest drop of air from the hard enclosure, and the prisoner, held first by iron and then by waves, will gurgle upward into the freedom of its own element. Down below a certain depth the weight of the sea will crush the iron suit of the diver as if it were made of cardboard. Where are the scales that can weigh the ocean? Who can compute the extent of those salt-beds that purify the water, preserving it from the pestilence

* Bishop Hughes preached this sermon on shipboard in June of this year.

that would destroy the life on both land and sea? Whose imagination is quite equal to conceiving the infinite masses and depths that stretch away from us in all directions to the ports of the world? Yet twice in twenty-four hours some quiet power, without an impression of strain, lifts all the terrific tons of the seas and hurls them as booming tides against all shores. The shallow man may pass the mystery by; but the deeper and more reverent man will get from the sea the lesson that he gets from the sanctuary and will say: "Twice have I heard this, once in the sanctuary and once on the sea, that power belongeth unto God."

The Mystery of Sorrow

Much the same might be said about the mystery of pain and sorrow. Men say often that the sea is cruel, cunning and deceptive. They indict it because it snatches men away from life and refuses to mark their graves. It has been a vast sepulcher for our human kind and has often served the mystery of sorrow. But let us be just to the ocean. It may be that tonight, amid the storm, helpless men and women will sink beneath the waves, with only the waters for a coffin, and the wild winds for a requiem, and the seaweeds for a shroud. The traveler always has visions of the sea as one of the graveyards of our race. We may say: "How cruel is the ocean? Well may it sigh and sob forever over its own deeds of cruelty."

But let us be fair. The sea, like a man, is not to be judged solely by its moods of anger. The most of its hours are kindly. Its breezes are the purest and freshest that blow, and they often come like a cooling benediction to the land itself. The sea fans the cheek of the fever; it quiets throbbing nerves; it rests the weariness of life; it is the world's greatest single health resort. Those who cannot live upon its waves often seek its shores and in its breezes find relief from summer's heat. So we do well to remember that, though the sea be a monster for a time, it is usually a kindly nurse bringing soothing and healing to the tired and sick of the world.

If some of you say that all this gives but one view of the sea, and that no fine words can hide the sorrows of its causing, sorrows as deep as itself, we are not at pains to dismiss the charge. We can say only that the ocean belongs to a wider question of providence. All good things have the double power of injury and benefit. Gravitation steadies, and overturns; water slakes thirst, and drowns; fire warms, and scorches. The axe that cuts wood will cut flesh likewise. This summer men have died where the snows of the Alps lift themselves in white and beckoning innocence; and other scores have died because that element which warms our homes and lights us in the darkness wrapped them in a robe of flame and smothered them out of life. Aye, and thousands more have died because the air itself bore to them the germs of disease and became the servant of sorrow. It is as easy to reconcile a speedy death upon the sea with the divine providence as it is to reconcile a death upon the land where, perhaps for weeks or months, a sufferer lies waiting for his discharge from life. The mystery of the sea is like unto the mystery of religion, and in this respect God's way is in both the sanctuary and the ocean.

II

But the way of God is in the sanctuary and the sea in a second important sense. There is in both a certain getting back to simplicity—that is, to things as they come from the touch of God. It might be said to be a part of the sanctuary's purpose to strip from us the artificialities and man-made devices of life and to bring us face to face with the things that are original and

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simple and eternal. We cannot bring hither our fine homes or our poor homes; our carriages cannot come any farther than the door. In our reverence and worship we cannot give heed even to differences of costume. Here showy dress is vulgar. We come back to the original elements of life. We must see things in their great simplicity. We must say: "Is my life yielded to the fashioning of God alone? Or do the passing fashions of this world brood upon it and mar it altogether?" The man who knows God knows that in the sanctuary the soul is stripped to simplicity. Mere conventionalities do not count before the throne. Worldly accretions are swept away. At last one soul faces one God, and they two stand alone on a kind of spiritual landscape.

You will all understand how this same sense comes to us on the sea. The ocean is not covered with scenery of man's making. The sky looks like that viewed by the sailor thousands of years ago. The blue of the water is not more blue than that which entranced the eyes of the ancients. Only this speck of a boat floating on the vastness has been made by man; all the rest was

made by God alone. The sea is not artificial. The sunset gains glory from the simplicity of its medium. It flashes its red and gold upon the waves and makes us think of the scene viewed by John the Revelator, when he looked out over the waters that surrounded his island-prison and saw "the sea of glass mingled with fire."

In spite of its changing moods, its restless grievings, the sea is the steadiest thing we know. The Psalmist elsewhere says of the earth: "For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods." This precisely reverses our usual thought. What sort of a foundation is a sea; what sort of an establisher is a flood? Yet view the continents and see how they change; then return to the sea and behold it there in its steady and unaltering life. One of the things that impresses the traveler as he passes from the galleries and churches of Italy up to the lakes and mountains of Switzerland is a sense of relief in moving from the scenery made by man into the scenery lifted up of God himself. This contrast reaches its highest when we come to the sea. The scenery out there has been touched by no builder and changed by no landscape gardener. It would seem that we are close to God's original handiwork standing still in its first simplicity. Surely the unmodified way of God is in the sea.

III

There is a third comparison. The sanctuary and the sea both give us the same defeated sense of progress. The horizon always looks the same at an equal distance. Once in a while a piece of wood floats by or a distant sail allows you to see progress; or you may glance at the waves and see them pushed aside by the prow of the ship. Yet one never seems to come nearer to the great goal. You go to your berth at night; you hear the throb of the screw as it compels the resisting waters to thrust the tons of weight over the deep; you rise up the next morning; you stand on the front of the ship; and the horizon is as far as ever from you. The blue curtain hangs there still—the one objective in the scenery. Why does not the ship plough on through that fleecy thing? Morning after morning we come forth to find that mocking goal just there ahead of us—so near that we can see it, so far that we cannot overtake it—a coaxing and an eluding mark. Imagine that you did not know the law of the horizon, did not know that as the ship moves the horizon moves also! You would say that no assurance of captain and no vigorous throbbing of engine and no mighty splashing of water at the prow would convince you that the steamer was not caught on some vast snag of the sea and that its progress was not a delusion.

Spiritual Stock-taking

All this is a parable of what happens to the soul in the sanctuary. Our Sabbaths are, in a way, days of spiritual stock-taking; or, to return to the figure, days for reckoning spiritual progress. We come to our worship each Lord's day and we say within ourselves: "We have made no progress; the goal is out yonder still in the far distance; it is our dream—and our despair." This may be so! God pity us if it is so! But there is another possibility, more hopeful and more complimentary to our spirits. Perhaps our spiritual horizon moves also and so hides our progress. Perhaps God lures us onward by the flying goal. Perhaps he thinks so much of our possibilities that he moves *us*. Sometimes he seems to move the goal even more rapidly. So it comes to pass that the good man often feels worse than the bad man feels. The man who boasts of his goodness is seldom a worshiper. Within the sanctuary the real heart cries out: "Woe is me! for I am undone. For I am a man of unclean lips: and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts." The good man never catches up with his horizon. It has a blessed way of fleeing onward. God sets new goals for growing spirits. Long ago we passed the point of the old horizon; but we did not know it. The one that gleams before us in this sanctuary is dropped anew by the hand of God from the glory of the sky to the end that we may fare forward on our plucky way, yielding to every breeze of the spirit and to every inner impulse toward holiness if so be that each new morning shall find us nearer to the blessed haven.

IV

The final and deepest lesson is that God is the Lord of both the sanctuary and the sea. His way is in them both. The sanctuary is his, dedicated by solemn usages to his worship and work. Bryant says that "the groves were God's first temples." Perhaps the sea belongs in that same sacred class. The Hebrew put nothing beyond the august ownership of God. Even more, he turned the world into a sacrament. He thought of God and said: "His hands formed the dry land." He thought of God again and said: "The sea is his, and he made it." It is this word that rescues the love of nature from idolatry. The question is not so much whether the sea is blue, and the sunset on the waters glorious, and the might of the waves terrific; the question rather is: Does the sea bring God's messages to our hearts? God still broods upon the face of the deep. The man trained to reverence feels this—unless he has seen the ocean so often that it has become a common thing to him.

The Jew of old had not only the advantage of a splendid doctrine of God; he had the lesser advantage of unfamiliarity with the sea. The Jews were not a seafaring people. From some of their heights they could glimpse the blue of the Mediterranean and could behold it lashing the face of Carmel; but for the most part they were an agricultural and pastoral people. When one of their number sailed away to distant ports and came back to relate the wonders of the sea, they heard his tales with bated breath. Their thought of the ocean was never staled by familiarity. Those that went down to the sea in ships saw the wonders of the Lord in the deep. The seas were held in the hollow of God's hand. He moved that hand, and the tides went leaping toward the shores. The Jew never could have quite appreciated the word that Joaquin Miller puts into the mouth of the mate on the vessel of Columbus

as the intrepid discoverer urged his vessel onward over the unknown:

They sailed and sailed as winds might blow,
Until at last the scared mate said,
"Why now not even God would know
Should I and all my men fall dead.
The very winds forget their way,
For God from these dread seas is gone;
Now speak, brave admiral, speak and say."
He said, "Sail on, and on, and on."

God was not absent from the seas. He was very present.

No wonder is it, then, that so often our religious figures of speech are brought from the ocean. The symbol of forgiveness is that God will sink our sins so deeply that remembrance will be had of them no more forever. The symbol of peace is Christ standing on the vessel of old and saying to the waves, "Be still," until the great calm comes. The symbol of God's final dominion is that of the day when the knowledge of him shall cover the earth as the waters cover the great deep. The symbol of life itself is a voyage on the ocean, the splendid uncertainties of the journey, the quiet and the storm, the movement toward the desired haven, and at last the shout of land, and home! What marvel, therefore, that devout souls sing a hymn, not great but good, voicing the prayer that they offer to their Captain and their Pilot:

Jesus, Savior, pilot me
Over life's tempestuous sea!
Unknown waves before me roll,
Hiding rock and treacherous shoal.
Chart and compass came from Thee!
Jesus, Savior, pilot me.

When at last I near the shore
And the fearful breakers roar
'Twixt me and my peaceful rest,
Then, while leaning on Thy breast,
May I hear Thee say to me,
"Fear not, I will pilot thee."

The Changeless Christ and Evangelism

By A. Earl Kernahan

Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever. Hebrews 13:8.

CHANGE is written in large letters across the face of the universe. We find it where we least expect to find it. I am told by scientists that if you take a bar of steel and a bar of brass and place them very close together and leave them for a considerable length of time, and then analyze them, you will find molecules of the steel bar in the brass, and molecules of the brass bar in the steel. Consequently, the only conclusion you can come to is that these two hard metals are in constant change and motion. We speak of the everlasting mountains, yet they are being constantly smoothed upon the top by the play of the elements and tunneled beneath by the genius of man's hand. Change is everywhere. I have seen it ingrained upon the peaks of the mountains, and crocheted upon the profiles of the hills by great railroad trunk lines.

When I was a boy, I had the privilege of hearing one of those unusual speakers who was able to take all of the experiences of the people who sat before him and make them preach marvelous sermons. Later, he was elected a bishop in the Methodist Episcopal church and was retired at their General conference held in Springfield, Massachusetts, in May, 1924. I am speaking of William A. Quayle. His address that day made a lasting impression upon me. His language was so homely and his delivery so unique that one of the paragraphs of that address still stays in my memory. It was not a definition of change, but a description of change given in his poetic manner. Here it is: "You remember a schoolhouse where the world was at its widest; the fishing stream; the swimming pool; the scramble up the bank with bruised feet; the spring at which you used to recline and drink and drink and drink and drink and yet you were never satisfied; the spankings wherewith your relatives regaled you that you never got one too many; the chores; the Saturdays; the first indications of spring; the stopping amid fields to see the sullen splendor of a cloud burned low like a great ship in conflagration." These things, he said, were the commonplace things of the past. The humdrums and stupidities of life. They were the hardy makers of our souls, but they were gone, never to return.

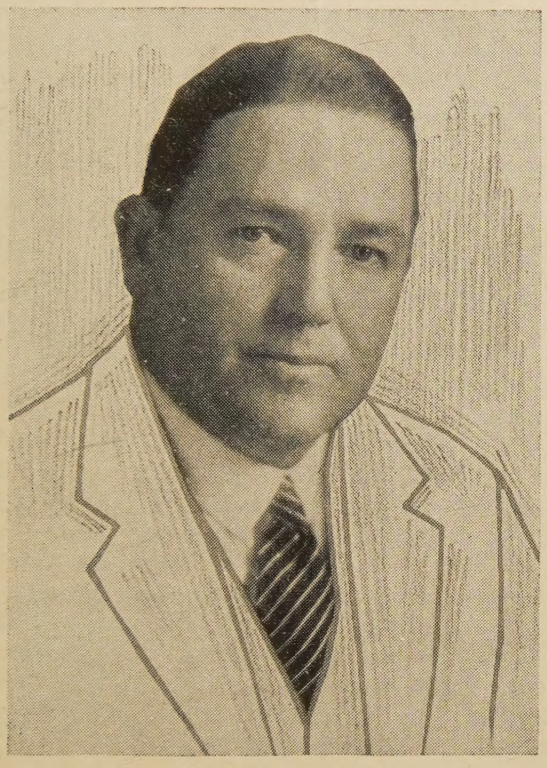
Changing Science

Scientific theories change. I remember that, when at college, we had a certain scientific theory which was at the basis of our investigation in a certain department of chemistry. We supposed that that theory was as changeless as the laws of the Medes and the Persians. We even referred to it as a law. I had not been graduated from college long, however, when I was informed that that theory had proved false and that all future experiments in that department of chemistry would be based upon a new theory.

Forms of government change. There has been a constant succession in changes of government from the old patriarchal down to the presidential—the best form of government God ever smiled upon. I cannot mention governments any more without digressing long enough to say that I am fearful that there are many people in the United States of America who have no idea of the cost of this government. It has evolved through agony and bloodshed which no tongue or pen will ever be able to describe adequately, but it has come to us through a series of changes.

We ourselves change. Some of the things we used to love, we hate; and some of the things we used to hate, we love. Our old homesteads change. A few years ago I was discharged from the army at Camp Dix, New Jersey. I started off across the long miles

to my native home in the middle west. I had no more than taken my seat in the Pullman car and the locomotive had started, when the wheels commenced to sing songs of other days. When I arrived in Iowa I found that old home all gone. One sister had been called home. My brother had been burned to death during the war. Another sister was living in a home upon the Pacific coast, another brother in a new home in the middle west, mother in another home, and I on the Atlantic coast. The old home was absolutely gone —never to return.



A. Earl Kernahan

I believe that I understand human nature somewhat, and I am surely telling the truth when I say that in the midst of this change, transition and chaos, the deepest instinct of the human soul is to reach up and get hold of something that does not change, preferably a personality. There has been but one system of thought, philosophy, or religion that has ever presented a Person who has been eternally changeless in the qualities that make him like God. There has been but one Person who, irrefutably, had declared himself, through the centuries, to be changeless in the virtues that make him stand out like a giant mountain in a mountain range. I am speaking of Jesus.

If I were to do the next logical thing in the pursuance of this thought, I would attempt to prove that Jesus is changeless. I am not going to do the logical thing. I ask you to consider a more fundamental question. The question is not as to the changelessness of Jesus, but concerning Jesus himself. If the reader happens to have been trained in the same kind of school as I was, please be patient. If you feel that we have no right to enter upon this ground, I beseech you to consider the thousands and thousands of young men and young women in our high schools and colleges who are more interested in this question than in any other consideration that has to do with religion. Down there in those years of natural doubt and necessary readjustments, they are looking towards us and asking, "Who is Jesus and what is Jesus?" What do we usually do when one from this group, or perchance someone from an older group, asks this question? We usually do nothing, and when we realize that there are hundreds who are thinking it but do not ask it, then the seriousness of this situation dawns upon us. I say, we usually do not do anything. It has been my experience that only one person in fifty ever talks about Jesus in his regular everyday life in a contagious manner. These people are trying to discover by our conversation whether we actually think that Jesus is real. We remain silent.

Who Can Define Jesus?

There is at least one reason for this silence. Here it is: We look into the face of Jesus and we see a beauty there that cannot be comprehended within a sentence, a paragraph, or a book; and we say, "Who can define Jesus in absolute terms?" We look upon his personality, and we see a power there that has transformed the thought of the ages, renovated the social life of millions of people, changed customs and let in the sunlight of a wholesome philosophy of life which has already started to set up the kingdom of God on earth. We say it is impossible to define Jesus in absolute terms. Here is the fallacy. Just because we discover that we cannot define Jesus in absolute terms, we should not cease to talk about him. As a matter of fact, we cannot define anything that has life in it in absolute terms. Religious creeds are very helpful, but they are never absolutely true. That is the wonder about Jesus. That is the romance in Christianity. For Christianity is life, not creed. We do not insist upon defining many things in terse and explicit sentences which we talk about in a persuasive and contagious way.

Think, for instance, of four of our indispensable possessions. What is beauty? I was at one time pastor of First Methodist Episcopal church, Northampton, Massachusetts. There is a wonderful old street in that city called Elm street. It is skirted on either side by giant trees. They are so large and so old that it is necessary to put bands of steel around some of them to keep the limbs from breaking down. On my way to the church every Sunday morning, I walked beneath the spreading limbs of these old trees, touched by their fresh beauty.

One day I was out in the middle of the ocean, upon the largest passenger ship owned by France. I was sitting far out at the stern and I saw a storm come staggering across the sea. One of the biggest dreams that I had as a boy and a young man, was to see a storm at sea. This may seem strange, for I was born and had lived nearly all my life in the middle west.

I was so green about the ocean that I felt like doing what a friend of mine said he felt like doing when he first saw the ocean. I wanted to get down on my knees and taste the water to see whether it had any salt in it. But here I was, face to face with one of the big experiences that I had always yearned after. I almost tied myself aboard and stretched out over the stern to see the storm that came wading on with giant strides towards us. It was beautiful. The heavens put on a mourning that I did not know even the fingers of God could weave and hang across the early day. The angry ocean churned up a thousand colors until, as you looked upon the crest of every wave, it seemed as though you were looking into a fairy park studded with myriads of jewels.

Defining Beauty

Now, I have been talking about beauty. I think that I have been talking about it contagiously. I do not believe that anyone would doubt that I believe there is such a thing as beauty. But what is it? Somebody says it is a harmonious relationship of parts. That's no definition. What is poetry? Somebody says it is the voice of the soul, but that's no definition. We have not yet been able to define the soul. What is the home? Somebody answers, "Why, the home is four walls, the ceiling, the floor, and a man and woman who have been joined in the holy bonds of matrimony." That's not a definition. You present to me a man and woman who love each other and have been joined together in the holy bonds of matrimony, and you have a home without a house. What is genius? Abraham Lincoln was a genius, but there have been scores of books written about Abraham Lincoln, and the one thing that they cannot explain is his genius.

Do we cease to talk about these indispensable possessions of the human race? Do we refuse to accept their contributions to our lives? How about beauty? When I am in the midst of beauty, I drink it in; and that same beauty courses down through my personality and becomes a ministry to folks. How about poetry? Just because I cannot tell you in explicit terms what poetry is, do I refuse to receive what it has to enrich my life?

Now, how about the home! Just because I cannot tell you what the home really is, shall I deny the arms of a woman the privilege of holding her offspring and breathing into his face the dreams of a hundred mornings? What shall we do about genius? We cannot define it, and yet this is the day of genius.

Jesus' Teachings Still True

It is surely fair to suggest that we should take exactly the same attitude toward Jesus. Of course we cannot define him. Words are too forced and rigid. Jesus cannot be tied down to this earth in the cold shackles of a definition, but we can talk about him with a greater certainty and contagion than we can about beauty, poetry, home, or genius—and the consequences are more needful.

Let us talk about the three ways in which Jesus does not change. First. He does not change in his teachings. We change in our interpretations of his teachings, but when we fathom what he really taught in reference to any particular relationship of life or about life itself, we can be sure that these teachings will never change. I am glad that we do change in our interpretations of his teachings. We are more nearly approximating the truth as the years go by.

May I suggest that there are many still living who remember when there were at least a half-dozen denominations or small branches of denominations that were teaching that babies who die without baptism are lost. I thank God that we do change in our interpretations of Jesus' teachings. I could take you to a score of cemeteries today where little headstones stick themselves up outside of the cemetery walls as monuments to this superstition. Thank God we are moving away from that, but Jesus remains ever the same in all of his teachings. When we change our teachings, we are simply getting nearer to Jesus.

If you were converted after you became adult, the first ambition that you had when you became acquainted with Jesus as your Savior, was to go home or out in the community and win somebody else to Christ. He taught you in that first wonderful experience that it was possible for you to take enough of his beauty into your face, his winsomeness into your voice, and his passionate love into your heart to go out and win scores to a Christian discipleship. If he is not teaching you that today, you have lost your contact with your teacher. He will teach his loyal followers that, as long as there is one man upon earth who has not become his friend. That is a sentimental teaching, but absolutely fundamental to the redemption of the world. Jesus has put this at the very basis of any evangelistic program. It was prerequisite to his own success. It is likewise absolutely indispensable if the modern church is to make the advance that looks very possible.

Jesus' Attitude Toward the Lost

Nor does Jesus change in his attitude toward lost people. Do you remember what it was? They brought before him a woman that was taken in sin. Jesus stooped his face in modesty, the modesty of a Savior. "If anyone of you men who brought this woman here is without sin," he said, "you cast the first stone"; and, while he waited, he wrote some words in the sand, the only words we have any record of his writing. When he lifted his face he looked deep down into the heart of the woman and said, "What, is there no man here to condemn you?"—for the men had all slipped away. "No, Lord," she answered, "there is no one here to condemn me." "Neither do I condemn you," Jesus said. "Go, and sin no more."

Christ's attitude was that of a Savior. As you read the records of his work, you will find that while he gave his attention, now and then, to condemnation and judgment, most of his arduous days were spent in the work of a Savior. May I emphasize just this one point? We slip altogether too easily into the attitude

of judges. We see people who are bad and we judge them. Meanness and sin should be rebuked, but people who are lost in the wild labyrinths of sinful habit need to be redeemed. We should make much greater progress if we were to take Jesus' attitude and give ourselves to the business of assisting him in his beautiful work of redeeming lost souls. People do not need to be judged half so much as they need to be loved. People do not need to be criticized adversely nearly so much as they need to have Christian sympathy. People, bad people, lost people, will respond in an amazing percentage of instances to an appeal for clean Christian living when the appeal comes from the lips of one who has tasted the romance of that abundant life of which our Master spoke.

The sooner we realize that the only body that Jesus has to use now, which can be seen by those whom we would win, is ours, the sooner the kingdom of God will come upon earth. Your hands may become his hands, your face may smile down into sin and sorrow with the sympathy and love of Jesus. Your heart may become the dynamic which will change many sordid situations. This gives our work a dignity and a beauty that are beyond compare.

Jesus and the Children

Jesus remains the same in his attitude toward children. I have left this to the last because it is the most important. Do you remember what Jesus' attitude was? He was surrounded by captious questioners one day who were attempting to prove that he was a revolutionary man. He saw a little child. He forgot the curs that were barking at his heels for destruction, saw the beauty in the face of the little child, and I think he must have placed his hand upon the little head, for he was a great teacher and he would know that when you place your hand upon the head of a child, your fingers touch the hearts of the parents. "Forbid them not to come unto me," said Jesus, "for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Let us get the whole suggestion here. Some of us have been under the influence of a heresy, one of the worst heresies that has ever attacked the Christian church. We have thought that a child had to be con-

A Pastoral Prayer

By Gaius Glenn Atkins, *Professor of Homiletics and Sociology, Auburn Theological Seminary*

O THOU who clothest Thyself with light as with a garment and in whose light we see light, we praise Thee for the revelation of Thyself in light-filled days and thank Thee for harvests of beauty as well as harvests of bread. We bless Thee for meadows and ripening wheat and the brave growth of planted fields and waters spread with light. Thou hast instructed Thy children to find Thee in the processionals of earth and sky. Grant, we beseech Thee, a grace of spiritual vision to see beyond these lesser lights, so fugitive even in their fullness, Thy boundless love and power.

Most Holy and merciful God forgive us every fault of deed, thought or desire which darkens the chambers of our souls. Save us from any fear of Thy searching light of truth and goodness. If it reveal us to ourselves as unworthy of Thy love and entertaining secret thoughts and ways which shun the light, may we accept that revelation and, through the sincerity of a godly sorrow for hidden faults and the passion of an holy desire, may we be renewed in every purpose and cleansed in every imagination by Thy grace and in His spirit who is the Light of the World.

Grant unto us, O God, who are burdened with many things which are beyond our strength unless Thou sustain us, and perplexed beyond our wisdom unless Thou illumine us, and uncertain of our ways unless Thou guide us, Thy strength, Thy guidance and what needed gleam of Thine understanding we are able to apprehend and follow. Send out Thy truth and light, let them lead us. May the sense of Thy near presence and sustaining care keep us untroubled in the midst of fretting things and may the peace which passeth all understanding guard our hearts and minds through Jesus Christ our Lord who hast given to all who trust and seek Him the bequest and benediction of His peace.

Remember, O Lord, all those who are distressed through the weakness or waywardness of others, bearing with them constantly the pain of unrequited love and a solicitude for those whom they can reach only through their love. Enable them in all their endeavors, grant them a wise and unfailing wisdom and so bring them to an understanding of Thy love which has borne with us so long. And this we are emboldened to ask through the revelation of Thy saving love in Jesus Christ.

Remember our country in this season of proud memories, sanctify to all its citizens the responsibilities of freedom and subdue our independence to brotherhood with other nations and our sense of power and possession to the needs and uses of men. Enrich this Republic in a concern for the enduring treasures, and shape its issues toward the splendors of the Republic of God. And this we ask in His name who established His Kingdom in righteousness and made the cross His throne, Our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. Amen.

verted. Notice what Jesus says. He says: "For of such is the kingdom of heaven." What does he mean? Precisely what he says. Children are Christians, children do not need to be converted unless we allow them to go astray. This is a big challenge to the home and to the church. It is the business of parents and of churches to keep children so near Jesus through Christian nurture and example that they will never become lost.

Here is Jesus' richest field of evangelism, for evangelism has to do not only with the saving of those who are lost, but with the saving of those who are saved; and there never was a time in the history of the world when it was quite so necessary to give attention to this kind of a product. The world needs a generation of boys and girls now who more nearly approximate Jesus' ideal of world citizenship than ever before. America stands in a place of great opportunity to supply this need, but she will fail to meet it unless her boys and girls are kept closer to Christ than any other generation in the history of the human race.

May we emulate Jesus here, and all be evangelists who will place the most emphasis upon the conservation of the fragrant beauties and potential passions of childhood. This is the message of the Changeless Christ to those who would succeed in evangelism.

Thieves in the Church

By George Craig Stewart

Will a man rob God? Malachi 3:8.

IT IS a tremendous rhetorical question which closes the final prophecy of the Old Testament. Will a man rob God? And for a terrible dramatic answer comes the gospel record of God's own Son. Go to Calvary and see! They robbed him of his liberty; they robbed him of his sandals, of the shirt off his back; they hanged him high between thieves and robbed him of his life. Yes, men will rob God. They will steal from orphans; they will steal from widows; they will steal from their own mothers; they will rob their brothers; and they will rob God.

There is a story told of Thaddeus Stevens, who in talking to Lincoln one day made a stinging reference to Cameron. "You don't mean to say you think Cameron would steal?" asked Lincoln. "No, I don't think he would steal a red-hot stove." Finding the reply too good to keep, Lincoln repeated it to Cameron, who indignantly demanded a retraction. Stevens went forthwith to the White house. "Mr. Lincoln, why did you tell Cameron what I said to you?" he asked. "I thought it was a good joke and didn't think it would make him so mad." "Well, he is very angry and made me promise to retract. I will now do so. I believe I told you he would not steal a red-hot stove. I now take that back."

Last Sunday night burglars visited this church, and others. Ecclesiastically they were broadminded. They had no denominational prejudices. Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, were all one to them. (A woman once went to a bank teller with a check and asked for change. "What denomination?" said the teller. "Lutheran," said the woman, "What are you?"). Had you asked these burglars what denomination they preferred, they would probably have said: One hundred dollar bills. They jimmied our office door. They blew the safe. They took all our communion alms for the poor, and our Sunday offerings including all the envelopes—they went upstairs, smashed in the panel of my study door, opened the tower bank of my little self-denial offering, reached around the crucifix on my desk, lifted my Sheaffer pen set; stole my field glasses; opened my secretary's bank and her desk, took the postage stamps, and finally went off with her typewriter. We haven't carried burglar insurance because it is expensive, and we never keep great sums of money in the vault. From now on we shall keep none there over night, except petty cash. In robbing the church they robbed the poor, for we have a deficit of nearly $10,000 in our current expense fund. They robbed not one person, but a thousand persons. They robbed a boy in the tuberculosis sanitarium whom I have been hoping to send to Arizona. They robbed a poor man in the hospital. They committed sacrilege. And I suppose the only reason they didn't take the sacred vessels was—not from any sense of honor or decency or reverence—but simply because they would have difficulty in disposing of the sacred swag.

I

Now I should like to meet those young men. You see I assume they were young. Ninety-nine per cent of our criminals are young. And if they were here before me I should first of all say this: "My dear fellow citizens, you and your kind constitute a very important section of our American community. You are criminals; one-third of one per cent of our population are criminals. You constitute a population about as big as that of Evanston. You cost the United States about $600,000 a day. You rob 39,000 people a year, and you burglarize 32,000 homes and offices a year. There has never been anything like the American criminal situation in any other civilization known to man. We are under the plague of you and your kind, and live in terror, as Indian villagers live in terror of tigers in the jungle. And you are multiplying like vermin. You are as hard to get rid of as cooties in a soldier's shirt. And the reason is not far to seek. We are too silly and sentimental in our treatment of you. We make it too easy for you to escape!" In the old days a man was hanged for stealing a sheep, and a generation ago a horse-thief had short shrift on the end of a rope. Today the enforcement of criminal law in America is a joke. In Chicago in 1926 there were 1,762 burglaries like yours; 430 persons were indicted. Of these, 45 went to the penitentiary and seventeen to reformatories, and 306 were discharged. The biggest cause for the

continuance of crime is to be found in the circumlocutions of our legal procedure, the delays in trial, the trivialities of exceptions, the evasions of technicalities, and the complicities of unscrupulous lawyers and the failure to enforce the penalties of the law. As Devon puts it: "There is only one principle in penology that is worth any attention and that is this: to find out why a man does wrong and make it not worth his while!"

The men that committed this burglary should by this time have been caught and tried and sentenced.

II.

Now, the minute I heard of them, my mind went back of the deed and back of the type to the individual.

George Craig Stewart

My Master was the friend of publicans and sinners. He loved wrongdoers, and felt sorry for them. He even loved Judas the thief who stole from the poor fund, who betrayed him for thirty pieces of silver. But the one time when I saw him in a whirlwind of passion was when he found thieves in the temple. With a whip of cords he thrashed them out, knocking over their money-changing tables, and saying to them: "Out—be gone! My Father's house shall be called a house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves!" Yes, I am sure he would have been very stern, very severe with these prowlers in the sanctuary. But he wouldn't have forgotten that each one was a human soul. And I shall try not to forget. Two thieves hung alongside our Lord. One was coarse, hard-boiled, brutal, blasphemous, filthy, unrepentant. The other, you remember, had something down inside him—a real man—that finally cried out, Lord remember me! There were several burglars here. And I like to think of them as different. And all of them after all human, like you and me. A great deal of our criminal psychology is just academic tommyrot. These burglars have homes, mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, perhaps wives. Some of them went to Sunday school, most of them have been baptized. They have tender emotions, feel love and sympathy, and grief and friendship and admiration, even as you and I. They probably go fishing and may even, for all I know, play golf.

When the enterprising burglar isn't burgling
And the cut-throat isn't occupied in crime,
He loves to hear the little brook a gurgling
And listen to the merry village chime.

The burglar isn't a different species. He is *homo*. He has feelings of patriotism, of human affection, and even at times a feeling he calls religion. What is it that makes him do this thing? Ask Judge Kavanaugh. He will tell you: The burglar is you and I with an extra development of three things—laziness, selfishness and cruelty.

"Yesterday," says the Judge, "after sentencing a man, I asked him good naturedly a few questions to probe the depth of his intent. I had done my worst. He could be frank."

"Ben," I said, "it's a pity a bright young fellow like you should waste himself. Why don't you go to work?"

"Well the world owes me a living, don't it?" he grinned.

"Is that so? What did you ever do to put the world in your debt?"

"I'm here, ain't I? I didn't ask to come!"

"Yes, but the world didn't ask you. And you can quit any time. And old Mrs. Williams from whom you stole doesn't owe you, does she?"

"Has she a right to have so much when I haven't a thing?"

"I think she has. But we won't argue that. But if you have a right to take anything you want from anybody, then anybody has a right to take anything from you, and then nobody has any right."

"Go on, your honor, have it your own way!"

Educating to Steal

One-half of our children have no bringing up in the rules of the game. One-half of the children have no religious education. They go to public schools, true, and even on to college where they can learn to sneer at the Mosaic law and the Christian code, where they will be taught that they are not to blame for anything they do, where they will learn there is no God, no morality, no ethical code and perhaps even no property rights. We need to realize afresh that religion and religious authority furnishes the one great dynamic for right conduct—that the laws of God in the moral field are as sternly immutable as the laws in the physical field.

In vain we call old notions fudge
And bend our conscience to our dealing,
The Ten Commandments will not budge
And stealing will continue stealing!

And our youth must learn that the way of the transgressor is hard. "From my thirty years' experience as a judge on the bench," said Judge Kavanaugh, "I can testify that the criminal, no matter how hardened, is to be pitied. I have clearly looked into the hearts of thousands of criminals, and I know it is better to be stolen from than to be a thief; better to be robbed than to be a robber, and even better to be murdered than to carry about the ghastly guilt of murder." And so today I call you to pray for those unfortunate brothers whose souls are cursed with the crime of sacrilege and robbery.

III.

And now let us be fair with the facts. There are probably thieves in this church today. I warn you not to leave your purse in the seat when you go up to holy communion. Again and again they are stolen that way. Prayerbooks are stolen and hymnals and Bibles. And there are people here who would not think of stealing a purse, but who would steal something much more valuable. They will keep their hands from picking and stealing, but they will not keep their tongues from lying and slandering.

> Who steals my purse steals trash,
> 'Twas mine: 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands
> But he that filches from me my good name
> Robs me of that which not enriches him
> And makes me poor indeed.

And there may be builders here who are thieves. Certainly the builders of the third stage of this church were thieves. They sneaked in lime mortar instead of cement: they scamped their work; they stole from the church, and it is costing us hundreds of dollars right now to put the stone in order. And there may be thieves in the church this morning who have been crooked in business during the week. Thank God, the ethics of business are improving, but business is still full of opportunities for the man who isn't scrupulously honest.

The Love of Money

The heart of the whole problem of stealing is one simple thing—avarice. The love of money is the root of all the evil. Money is a good thing, a necessary thing, but I want to make three observations about it:

First, there are better things than money. Good health is better. A sympathetic heart is better. And a clear conscience is better.

And here is the second thing. Money is a stewardship. It isn't ours. God lets us use it. It is not ours, but his. And the Christian who loves God and loves his church, and who hogs all the money for himself, who doesn't treat it as a stewardship, who spends it on golf clubs and theaters and dinners and entertainment and gives a pittance to the extension of the kingdom of Jesus Christ is robbing God, is stealing from his church.

And the third observation is this. You cannot keep it forever. Lay up for yourselves treasures, says our Lord, not upon earth, "where moth and rust corrupt and thieves break through and steal, but in heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt and thieves do not break through and steal." You cannot lay up stocks in heaven, but you can lay up generosity, mercy, unselfishness.

One day a rich man of a miserly disposition visited a rabbi, who took him by the hand and led him to a window. "Look out there," he said. The rich man looked out into the street. "What do you see?" "I see men and women and little children." Again the rabbi took him to a mirror. "What do you see now?" "I see myself." "Behold, the window there is glass, and in the mirror there is glass. But the glass of the mirror is covered with silver, and no sooner is silver added than you cease to see others, and see only yourself."

And so back we come to our text. Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, "Wherein have we robbed thee?" In the tithes and offerings. Stop stealing. Start giving. It's not enough not to lie. Speak positive truth. Not enough not to worship false gods. Worship the true God. Not enough not to steal from the church. Give to it. Not enough not to rob God. Bring God your offering. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse and prove me, saith the Lord, if I will not open the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

His Last Will and Testament

By Hugh T. Kerr

Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me. John 17:20, 21.

WE ARE on holy ground. We are in the presence of Jesus on his knees. We are listening to him pray. We are overhearing him express the things that are nearest to his heart. He is making his "last will and testament." The day for him is done. He is folding up his life's work and the breath of eternity is in his words.

Where could we cast our anchor more securely? In the life of John Knox we read that during each day of his long last illness his wife read to him this seventeenth chapter of St. John, together with the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah and a chapter from the Ephesians. On the last day of his life, in the afternoon, he asked for the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians. Late that evening he said to his wife, "Go, read where I cast my first anchor," and quietly she read the familiar words. His had been a stormy life. He had

sought the purity but not always the peace and unity of the church; but always he cast his anchor into the deep sea of infinite love and in the cleft of the Rock of Ages it held fast.

Here are words that cannot fail. Here is a prayer that must be answered or the whole fabric of Christianity must melt away as in a dream. This is our Lord's prayer: "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us; that the world may believe that thou didst send me." Here we have in a compact sentence set forth what I may choose to call the missionary manifesto, the evangelistic enterprise, the ecclesiastic emphasis, and the apologetic appeal of the gospel.

I—The Missionary Manifesto

The words are clear and unmistakable, "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also." That is love, like the love of God, "Not for these only—but for them also." Not for America only—but for Africa; not for the white race only—but for the yellow race. It is wonderful, marvelous, magnificent! Sometimes we are told that the missionary manifesto rests solely upon the last great commission of our Lord, yet in reality we find it interwoven into everything he said and did. Sometimes we are told that Jesus was caught in the glamour of what is called apocalyptic, the expectation that the end of the world was immediately at hand and that it would come suddenly upon the generation still alive. Here he is, however, reaching out in his prayer to the ends of the world and to the end of time! "Not for these alone—but for them also." He lifts the veil and allows us to see the frontiers of his kingdom stretching out to the sunrise and the sunset.

Would that we could see as plainly! I cannot get out of my mind a little lad who took me by the hand as I entered the grounds of the Hospital for the Insane in Canton, China. It was not a pleasant place to visit. Why this little lad was there, having the freedom of the place, I did not ask. There was a wistful and faraway expression in his eyes. He kept a sure and firm grip on my hand as we went through the buildings. Every now and then he would look up and in quite good English he would say, "You are a friend of mine," and looking into his searching face I would say, "Yes, son, I am a friend of yours." There he stands in my mind representing the other side of the world and saying for all little lads like himself, "You are a friend of mine." Yes, by the grace of God I am a friend of his because of the friendship that knows no barriers of race or religion. It is when we see the horizon lift that we remember the words of Jesus, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

II—The Evangelistic Enterprise

There is grace in the grammar. Jesus is looking far off into the future, but he speaks as in the present—"For them also that believe on me through their word." Something is still to happen. The history of the church is yet to be written, but in his mind everything is as if it were already a reality. "Them also that believe on me through their word." Do we seek a program of evangelism? Here it is. Here is both the method and the message. How simple the method! "Them also that believe on me through their word—their spoken word." The gospel is mediated to men through personality. It passes from lip to lip and heart to heart and every true disciple is the Lord's evangelist. There is no other way. If you will take time to read through the book of the Acts and then read through Harnack's "The Mission and Expansion of Christianity," which deals with the first three centuries, you will learn the lesson that only as the gospel passes from life to life does it pass from land to land. If there is to be a revival of Pentecost it will come only as it came at first, by the fire of the spirit burning like a flame first in the hearts of Christian men and women, and that flame will kindle a fire throughout the church; for as has been so well said, "One loving heart sets all the world on fire."

How simple the message! "Them also that believe on me." Here is Christianity defined in the words of Jesus. No one ever simplified the Christian religion as did Jesus. "Them also that believe on me." Talk about the fundamentals! Here is *the* fundamental. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

In the first article in the volume, "The Reunion of Christendom," a book bearing upon the subject of church union, his eminence Cardinal Bourne, archbishop of Westminster, states that it is never lawful to distinguish between what is fundamental and what is not. He says: "All true followers of Christ, therefore, will believe the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God with the same faith as they believe the mystery of the august Trinity, the infallibility of the Roman pontiff in the sense defined by the Ecumenical Vatican council with the same faith as they believe the Incarnation of our Lord."

Well, it is not so written in the last will and testament of our Lord. It is not so written in the bond. Christianity is much more simple. This is what is written: "Them also that believe on me." His hand has thrown open the kingdom of heaven to all believers, and the door which he has opened no human hand can shut. This is the evangelistic message.

III—The Ecclesiastic Emphasis

"That they may all be one." Jesus does not use the word ecclesiastic. There is no mention of anything ecclesiastical here. He does not even mention the church. What we mean by the church has no place in this high priestly prayer. There is nothing artificial, organizational, ecclesiastical here. Jesus is thinking and living in another world. He is thinking in terms of men and women and little children who love him; and he prays that they may be bound in the same spiritual unity that binds him to his Father.

He is not thinking in terms of church union, but of

Christian union. Much of our discussion on church union is foreign to his language. Searching through all the world for an illustration of that union he finds it in the union existing between himself and his Father, "That they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee." He might have looked elsewhere. He might have thought of a mighty army marching as to war, keeping step to one central command, moving out as one man against the enemy. This is the familiar illustration we use. He might have thought of a far-flung empire saluting one flag, executing one law, having allegiance to one throne. He thought in no such terms. The oneness he was thinking of was a oneness of life and love. The very language suggests it. The vocabulary is painstakingly discriminating—"That they all may be one; even as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee." Notice how the sentence ends: "That they also may be in us." It is a vital union. It is a union of character and life in one great unifying purpose of love. If you seek further illustration, here it is: "I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that bideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing."

Beyond the dreams of men the prayer of Jesus already has come true. Anyone who will take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea will find a fellowship in Jesus Christ unknown to the world. He will hear the voice of little children out of every nation singing the lovely songs of faith and salvation which his own children sing. He will find men and women whose language he cannot understand but who seek to reveal to him the deepest things of his own life, and who are nearer to him in thought and affection than the neighbors of his own street.

Personal Service

The world may be careless and blind; but blind and careless as it is, it can understand love when it expresses itself in personal and social service. Julian the apostate could contend against the logic of Christianity, but not against its love. "These godless Galileans," he said, "feed not only their own poor, but ours." When the great plague swept the empire in the reign of Maximinus Daza, the historian Eusebius tells us what happened: "The Christians were the only people who amid such terrible ills showed their fellow-feeling and humanity by their actions. Day by day some would busy themselves with attending to the dead and burying them (for there were numbers to whom no one else paid any heed); others gathered in one spot all who were afflicted by hunger throughout the city, and gave bread to them all. When this became known, people glorified the Christian's God, and convinced by the very facts, confessed that the Christians alone were truly pious and religious."

Once again the Spirit of God is moving through the churches, revealing a unity in love and service. This unity must find visible expression. Every day the road to Christian union is being trodden by an increasing multitude. The highways leading to Lusaunne and Stockholm and Jerusalem have been thrown up for all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity. It is a growing conviction that if church union is still in the distance, Christian union is knocking at our door. The voice of the herald is heard in the land, "A highway shall be there and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads."

IV—The Apologetic Appeal

Christian union has been championed by many advocates and for many reasons. It is said, "We must present an unbroken front to the paganism of our day." We agree. It is said, "There is a heart-breaking wastage in men and money due to overlapping and even competing churches." We agree. It is said, "The hundred missionary societies in China today are as suicidal for Christianity as the civil divisions are to her natural peace and prosperity." All these arguments are of secondary importance. The one great argument for Christian unity is the apologetic appeal of our Lord's burning words, "That the world may believe that thou didst send me."

Hugh T. Kerr

On every hand we hear it said that Christianity must find a new apologetic. Here is the apologetic. Here is the power behind the missionary manifesto. Here is the dynamic of the evangelistic enterprise. Here is the reason for Christian unity. The truth of the gospel must be mediated by a church that is catholic in its gospel and catholic in its spirit. A divided church cannot witness to a reuniting, restoring, unifying, redeeming, reconciling Savior. Speaking out of the division

of the mission field and out of the fine fraternity of the movement towards union in South India, Bishop Azariah, an Indian Christian, says: "The unity of all races in one church must be maintained, if for no other reason, at least for this, namely, to demonstrate to India that the Church of Christ oversteps all natural barriers of race, color, and nationality, and that *in Christ* all are one."

That is the true note. The gospel cannot be cut into slices and sections. Christ is not and cannot be divided. Victory waits upon the united testimony of a church at one with herself and her Lord. Speaking for the people of the non-Christian Orient, Dr. Anezaki, the learned Buddhist scholar of Japan, contends that it is unlikely that Christianity can be successful to any great degree in Japan. What are his reasons? They ought to be prayed over by every Christian. "First, the lack of Christian unity among the various sects or churches. Second, the opposition of Christianity to the teachings of science. Third, the discrepancy between Christian teaching and conduct, especially in reference to questions of social and economic organization." This is what a scholarly Buddhist says to those who would extend Christ's kingdom throughout the world.

What shall we say to these things? We shall first of all bow our heads and confess our shame that we are unworthy to be messengers of him whom we call our Lord. We will pledge our life and love, that we shall say no word that will hinder, but speak always to the end that we may help forward the movement towards Christian unity. This also we will say, that unworthy as we are, over against the opinion of Dr. Anezaki and other Christian critics, we appeal to the last will and testament of our Lord. I do not think for one moment that the prayer which Jesus prayed can fail! It is not within the realm of possibility that his prayer will miss fulfillment! Other prayers may fall to the ground, but his prayer will prevail because it expresses the mind and will of the Eternal. His prayer expresses what ought to be, and by the grace of God it will be. Already its fulfillment is on the way.

"Be of Good Cheer"

Only recently I saw a facsimile of the memorable order issue by Field Marshal Haig in the darkest days of the world war. I was in France at the time, up in Amiens. Those were dark days and I can still see the long trains coming back from the front with broken and wounded men. I remember the thrill that passed through the men of the British army as General Haig's critical order was read. It was the famous order containing the words, "With our backs to the wall." It said: "Every position will be held to the last man; there must be no retirement. With our backs to the wall and believing in the justice of our cause each one of us must fight on to the end. The safety of our homes and the freedom of mankind alike depend upon the conduct of each one of us at this critical moment. But be of good cheer, the British Empire must win in the end."

I was interested in reading this, for I remember that the order published in France did not so end. The facsimile copy contains the sentence, "But be of good cheer, the British Empire must win in the end"—but the Field Marshal had stricken them out. Twice he ran his pen through the words and they did not appear in the proclamation. I have thought a good deal as to why General Haig struck those last words from his message. The words have a Bible touch, for this man was a Christian. Perhaps, Scotchman as he was, he did not wish to boast. Perhaps he was not sure. Who could be sure? Those were perilous days. Perhaps he was not sure. The future was hidden from him.

In the last will and testament of our Lord these words stand. They are not stricken out. Here they are: "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Knowing all, and seeing all, he let the words stand. They are not stricken out. Already the victory is his. The citadel is taken and it remains for us to possess the field.

The Secret of Great Living

By D. Elton Trueblood*

ON a hilltop above the city of Capetown, South Africa, stands a memorial to a man who will long be remembered. The man was Cecil Rhodes. It is appropriate that the memorial, with its British lions cut from marble, should stand facing northward, overlooking the great continent of Africa. It is appropriate because southern Africa was the chosen field of labor of this stalwart British patriot. He was a man who had many enemies, a man whose actions often seemed unjustified, and yet a man whose life was dignified by a great passion. His controlling aim was the organization of South Africa in the name of Great Britain and this involved the construction of the Cape to Cairo Railway. Today the railway is a virtual reality and travelers may ride on a crack train northward from Capetown to see the Victoria Falls, a cataract much more stupendous than Niagara. The Union of South Africa is a good working government and one of the most promising in the family of English speaking nations. The marble lions look northward over Africa and see what Rhodes dreamed might some day be.

The outstanding feature of such a life is its remarkable singleness of aim. Rhodes is remembered largely because he was able to eliminate all else in the pursuance of a single plan. Perhaps this is the explanation of all lives we admire most; perhaps it is the secret of great living. The idea involved was given deathless form by Jesus in one of his briefest, though most perfect parables: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls, who, when he

* Dr. Trueblood preached this sermon at the Friends' Meeting House, Washington, D. C., in the presence of President Hoover.

had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it."

Living for the Big Things

The same truth has been put exceedingly well in the words of a modern novelist, who also seems to understand the significance of a life lived for one big thing rather than for many little things. In "The Song of the Lark," Willa Cather pictures a young girl struggling hard to hold on to noble aims in the midst of dull, sordid surroundings. At one time Miss Cather makes the girl say, "But it's silly to live at all for little things. Living's too much trouble unless one can get something big out of it." Here, then, is the immortal truth of the old parable, cast into our contemporary American idiom.

The fact that living is a troublesome business is growing on our modern consciousness. A great share of the labor of all the workers of the world goes simply for the keeping of our bodies alive. When you put together all of the people who work to provide the three common necessities of food, clothing, and shelter, you have most of the inhabitants of the globe. Such a group includes the farmers, the housewives, the woodsmen and the builders, as well as many of the manufacturers and merchants. Probably no person has ever realized adequately the patience and energy that have gone into the simple humdrum task of washing the same dishes endlessly. So long as we live we cause a great deal of work for somebody, ourselves or someone else. There are always beds to make, floors to sweep, clothes to wash, and fuel to provide. If we travel, there are tracks and roads to repair or ships to keep in order. We never understand how fully we are bound to earth until we begin to contemplate the trouble of mere existence. This trouble has been markedly lessened by the use of modern machinery, but it is still great.

The problem of the troublesomeness of living could be solved by putting an end to life, but that solution does not seem to appeal to normal, healthy minded persons. The only solution left for us, then, is that of finding some interest big enough to make all of the trouble seem small by comparison. No person would care how much trouble living involved if it were part of some great achievement. Perhaps this is the difference between those who merely lead an existence and those who really live. Many who do have an aim have one so small that it is not worth the sacrifice. Is it not ridiculous for a man to go to the trouble of keeping soul and body together only in order to make money? Is it not silly to bother about food and shelter for the sake of gaining a cheap notoriety?

Finding Something Worth While

It is interesting to notice how readily men and women respond when they find something big enough to make it seem worth all of the trouble. This is what made the war such a significant thing in the lives of many persons twelve years ago. Thousands came to believe that here was a task actually worthy of the effort, a task suited to their real powers. The result was that unpromising young men were sometimes changed into heroes almost over night. This is still true, regardless of whether or not we think their idealism was well founded. The task of making the world safe for democracy seemed to them large enough to justify any amount of trouble and to dignify the routine of ordinary life.

This, too, is the explanation of such an undertaking as the Mt. Everest expedition. The daring young

D. Elton Trueblood

Englishmen who were last seen near the top and still going were fed up with the small world of society; they wanted to lose themselves in something big enough to require the use of all of their powers. Their ascent and death is symbolic of a deep seated feeling in all of us. We are quite certain it was better for them to have lost their lives on the roof of the world than to have lived on as doddering and inconsequential country gentlemen. Captain Scott gave eloquent expression to this conviction in the last words he wrote before he froze to death in the Antarctic. The hardly legible words, written by a man whose fingers were already frozen, declared that it was better to perish thus than to live in ease at home. We hate instinctively whatever is small or fussy, but something big to live for can bring out qualities in us that are truly divine.

The One Thing Needful

If this finding of the great pearl is the secret of living that is worth while, how are we to go about it? How can we learn to get something big out of life? Probably the first thing to do is to know what the

pearl is that one is seeking for. Just to decide what it s that we care most about is a great help. Often we wake up to find that we are doing a multitude of useful things, but are not getting around to the one thing n which our interest is greatest. If we simply clarify our thinking enough to decide what our all-engrossing aim is, we are already well on the way to ultimate victory.

What is it that you care so much about that you will sacrifice all else for it? There are many interests which are big enough to dominate a whole life and dignify it, but one might be taken simply as an example, the achievement of world peace. Those for whom this has come to be the dominant interest reason as follows: There are many sorrows in the world, but the coming of war increases them tenfold. It causes countless strong men to be maimed and ruined for life, it causes unending loneliness in many a simple home, it stirs up hatred that poisons the very depths of character, it destroys works of beauty that have been produced by infinite pains. Worst of all, it takes the nobler characteristics of men, such as thrift, self-sacrifice and courage, and uses them to augment the destruction. Here is an evil so tremendous that one of the noblest things any lover of mankind can do is to bend every effort in the attempt to put an end to it.

The war was a great interest that dignified many obscure lives, but there is an interest even greater and more all-consuming. It is a task big enough for the strongest man or woman alive.

A Life with a Purpose

Something of the meaning of such an ennobling task came to the citizens of Boston who attended the farewell meeting in honor of Professor Gilbert Murray at the completion of his last American visit. After a brilliant address this man, who has effected a rare combination of scholarship and human contact, spoke, in substance, as follows:

> "I came over to Harvard and to Boston for three things: I came, in the first place, to talk about Greek, and I hope that there are some who have understood, for Hellenism has much to give those who love her. I came, in the second place, to talk about poetry, and I hope that many more have understood this, for a life barren of poetry is barren indeed. I came, in the third place, to talk about peace, and I hope everyone has understood that; for, if the peace of the world is not maintained, these other things for which we care will be no longer possible."

Here is an example of a life made significant by the singling out of one great purpose.

If the first task is to decide what our all-engrossing interest is, the second is the determination to discard the merely good. In her novel, mentioned above, Willa Cather makes the same little girl say, "Only, if you want a big thing, you've got to have nerve enough to cut out all that's easy, everything that's to be had cheap." Perhaps it is a truism to say that the good is enemy of the best, but we certainly do not heed it often. Most of us allow ourselves to be worked in on a multitude of committees and organizations until our main task often goes undone.

Many a superior person fritters his energies away because he allows himself to be made chore-boy for a variety of good causes. Here is a place where the desire to be accommodating may become a vice; it is a vice because it eliminates the best. *It is necessary not only to find the pearl of great price, but also to sell all of the others.*

Most of the choices any of us have to make are between a variety of goods. We are always choosing between a number of pearls, not between pearls and pebbles. A choice between the obviously good and the obviously bad would mean no effort at all for most of us. The courage we need is that which will help us to disregard the appeal of that which is high, but not the highest.

A good illustration of this fact may be seen in the art of reading. No one can hope to read even the books published in a single year, but the number of real masterpieces is so small that the average man can read them all. The price he must pay, however, is that of refusing to read the merely good books that happen to come to his attention.

There is one particular in which the parable of the goodly pearls cannot be taken too literally as a parallel of human life. When we are dealing with physical pearls, only one fortunate man at a time can own them, but when we are dealing with dominant interests we have something which can be owned by many. There are many persons who have already found themselves in the effort to achieve world peace, but that does not keep any of us away from the same field. The pearl can be owned by as many as are willing to pay the price. There are many who are trying to add to the sum total of beauty in the world, either in art or literature or music, but the same fulfillment of life is still open to the rest of us. The fact that some are passing on culture to the young and finding in that task an interest large enough to challenge all of their powers does not keep us from buying the very same pearl.

It is foolish to live for little things, but it is glorious to live for big ones.

The Country Faith

HERE in the country's heart
Were the grass is green
Life is the same sweet life
As it e'er hath been.

Trust in a God still lives,
And the bell at morn
Floats with a thought of God
O'er the rising corn.

God comes down in the rain,
And the crop grows tall—
This is the country faith,
And the best of all!

NORMAN GALE.

God's Measuring Rod

By Walter Dudley Cavert

Behold, a man with a measuring line in his hand. Then said I, Whither goest thou? And he said unto me, To measure Jerusalem, to see what is the breadth thereof, and what the length thereof. Zechariah 2:1, 2.

WE HAVE a modern mania for judging things by their size. We admire everything that is big. Our enthusiasm is immediately aroused by a city with a big population, a university with a big registration, or a factory with a big production. We think a man is to be respected if he has a big income, and a church successful if it has a big membership and can attract a big congregation.

God's measuring rod is far different from ours. He is interested in quality instead of size. Man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart. Man measures life with a yardstick and computes its values with an adding machine. God judges our personal lives and our civilization by the spiritual standards established in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

The young man in our text intended to find out the exact area covered by the city of Jerusalem. God sent an angel to stop him, for Jerusalem had a higher significance than could be determined by his measuring line. The importance of the holy city was not in its size, but in its sacred associations and the religious inspiration which it furnished to the world. There was far more to Jerusalem than could ever be told by saying it was so many rods long and so many rods wide.

The Sufficiency of Youth

The man with the measuring instrument was young. His youth was his one distinguishing characteristic. As people grow older and have the wisdom of experience they learn, or ought to learn, that life is more than its cubic contents, that the spirit of a city is more important than its territorial area, that there are other criteria more accurate than size and bulk. But youth, which has not yet passed through the school of suffering and learned the moral and spiritual lessons which are so emphatically taught by pain and loss, is easily deceived by surface appearances. After a few short years in school, youth feels competent to take the dimensions of the entire universe and everything in it.

You cannot measure a man by putting him on the scales and finding out how much he weighs, or by standing him up against the wall and taking his height in feet and inches. How big were Abraham Lincoln and George Washington? Both were over six feet tall, but their greatness was not in their unusual height but in their character, in the lofty principles that governed their personal and political conduct. How big was Napoleon Bonaparte? Only five feet and three inches high, yet his smallness was not in his diminutive body but in the extreme littleness of his soul, his ruthless ambition to be a world emperor instead of the servant of his fellowmen.

How big was Jesus? We do not know. The Bible tells us nothing at all about his size or his physical appearance. It is well for us that these facts have been hidden from our knowledge. We are saved from the temptation to judge him by anything but his towering spiritual attainments, his revelation of what God is and of what man ought to be.

How Big Was Lincoln?

Nor can we form any accurate estimate of man's value by his possessions or surroundings—the amount of his pay check or bank account, the number of cylinders in his automobile, or the size of the house in which he lives. Abraham Lincoln was born in a tiny log cabin. Tourists always want to measure it, to know its length and breadth and height. But how can one measure the log hut in which he was born, or the slightly larger house in which he passed his boyhood? All the love of Nancy Hanks was in it, her prayers and her hopes for her son. In it was a boy's desperate struggle for an education as he learned to write and cipher on the fire shovel, and read and re-read the Bible and Pilgrim's Progress, Robinson Crusoe, Aesop's Fables, the history of the United States, and the life of George Washington. In it were all his aspirations and ambitions, as he looked beyond the limited horizon of the frontier and longed to be ready for the opportunities for service that might some day come to him. Leave your measuring stick at home when you visit a shrine like the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln. Such a cabin becomes one of the most spacious and palatial residences in which a youth was ever reared.

How large is your own house? It may contain twenty rooms and yet be narrow and cramped because it is occupied only by small-souled people. It may contain five rooms, or two, or one, and yet be as large as a mother's tender affection and a father's overflowing love. A man once taunted Oliver Goldsmith by saying scornfully, "So you lodge in a basement!" Like a flash came back the stinging reply, "Your soul must live in a basement." A man stands convicted of having a basement mind, of lacking both character and culture, and of being utterly unable to appreciate life's richest values, if he thinks the sum total of knowledge is that twelve inches make a foot and three feet make a yard.

Another time when we need to place less reliance upon the tapeline is when we turn to the Bible. It is possible to take scientific measurements of the Scriptures, to make a critical and searching analysis of their contents, and yet utterly miss their meaning and message.

A prisoner who was condemned to solitary confinement had the Bible as his only companion and studied it for several years. He gathered the following facts: It contains 3,586,489 letters; 773,692 words; 31,173

verses; 1,189 chapters; the word "and" occurs 46,277 times; the middle verse is the eighth verse of the 118th Psalm; all the letters of the alphabet are found in the twenty-first verse of the eighth chapter of Ezra; the longest verse is Esther 8:9 and the shortest verse is John 11:35. But in this superficial study of the words of the Bible, its message of righteousness and truth and forgiving love seems to have escaped him. We

Walter Dudley Cavert

are not told that he allowed the Bible to reach his heart and that he was led to cry out, "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

A different kind of Bible measuring has been done in recent years. We have studied its authorship and the conditions under which it was written. We have delved into the past and tested its historical accuracy. We have unraveled the original documents which were woven together to give the book its final form. We have found that the last part of Isaiah was written by a different prophet than the first thirty-nine chapters, that Paul wrote more than two letters to the Corinthians, and that David was not the author of all the Psalms.

Measuring the Bible

All this yardstick study of the Bible has given us scholarly information that we needed to have. All this ought we to have learned, but there is something more vital—the living message of the Bible for modern life—that we ought not to leave unlearned. It is one of the spiritual tragedies of our times that in taking the historical and literary dimensions of the Bible, we have neglected it as the Book of life. We need now to spend less time in measuring the Bible, and more time in allowing the Bible to measure us. We need to submit our personal lives and our social conditions to the searching analysis of the prophets and of Jesus' teaching, to open our minds and hearts to the Bible's flaming truths about justice and brotherhood, love and faith and moral power.

The church of Christ also needs to be submitted to some other test than that of superficial measurement. We are besieged with surveys and questionnaires and statistics. Our young men compile the membership figures of the various denominations; they compute the amount of money that is raised for local expenses and benevolences; they estimate the attendance and plot curves that go up and down. When they have done their worst we may still remember that the world is not saved by figures, and that the church is neither built nor destroyed by statistics. The only thing that really matters is the quality of its spiritual life. "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

What Shall the Church Study?

The most important book for the church to study is not the book of Numbers, but the Gospel of John, which tells how Jesus came to give us light and life; and the book of Acts, which records the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and reminds us how the early Christians went out into all the world as willing messengers of the divine truth. If we had eyes to see and ears to hear, we would see an angel holding up his hand and crying out to our statisticians, "Stop, the dimensions of the church can not be set down in figures, but only in the lives of men whose hearts have been renewed by its gospel and strengthened by its fellowship." No questionnaire ever includes spaces for reporting the tempted souls who have found moral power, the bereaved souls who have found comfort, the hardened souls that have been warmed into life, and the sinful souls that have been regenerated by the spirit of Christ. These are the things that tell whether the church succeeds or fails.

Our obsession with numbers and size is most plainly evident when we turn to the standards which we apply to our cities and national life. It was a young man who started to measure Jerusalem. Perhaps it is because America is still young as a nation that she attaches so much importance to mere bigness. Look at the circular which is sent out by the average chamber of commerce. It tells how big the city is, how many people lived in it ten years ago, and how much the population has increased in the last decade. It gives pictures of its factories and banks and business houses, and lists the total value of its property and the amount of its payrolls. If it contains a factory or building or institution that is the biggest of its kind, that fact will stare at you in blackfaced type. Of course, it also conveys the information that the city has good schools and fine churches and is a desirable community in which to live, but the main emphasis is always on physical and financial bigness.

Dr. Halford E. Luccock says that "Jumboism" is becoming our national religion. Jumbo was P. T. Barnum's largest elephant, famous as the biggest animal in captivity, and never failed to draw the crowds. A multitude of people are ready to bow down and reverence a thing which is big, regardless of how deficient it may be in more important qualities. There is truth as well as satire in Booth Tarkington's prayer for the modern city:

Give me of thyself, O Bigness,
Power to get more Power;
Riches to get more riches;
Give me of thy sweat to get more sweat;
Give me of thy bigness to get more Bigness for myself,
O Bigness, for thine is the Power and the Glory,
And there is no end but Bigness for ever and ever.
Amen.

Could there be a more striking contrast than that of the booster conception of the city and the ideal pictured by John? The New Jerusalem is to be glorified by the presence of God. Beauty and righteousness are its dominant qualities. Men are no longer being exploited for gain, but a sympathetic hand wipes away all tears from their eyes and there is no more sorrow or pain. The city which is seen by prophetic souls who have been touched by divine insight cares far less about becoming materially big than it does about reflecting the human and spiritual values which are the standards of the kingdom of God.

Finally, let us notice that there is more to the universe than can ever be revealed by scientific investigation. We are tremendously impressed these days by the immensity of the universe. The little world of our childhood has been enlarged to an almost inconceivable degree. The stars are so far distant that they can not be measured by ordinary miles but by what the astronomer calls a light year, which is the distance light travels in a year going at the incomprehensible speed of 186,000 miles a second. The north star is forty light years away. The light which will stream forth from it tonight started on its way before many of us were born.

The immediate result of this knowledge of the prodigious size of the universe is that the material bulks large in our minds and the spiritual element of life dwindles into insignificance. Our faith is lost amid the stars. Man seems to be only a flitting moth which passes a meaningless existence for a day and then is blotted out forever. Our religion is reduced to a state like that of the primeval chaos and becomes "without form and void."

The World and Man's Mind

But after all, how is it that we know this vast outer world? Only as it has been measured and understood by the inner world of man's mind. If we remember that no star ever shines for us except as it shines in our mental ability to perceive it, and that the finite intelligence of man argues for the infinite intelligence of God, our human existence takes on a new dignity and value. The ultimate question we need to ask is not, "How big is the universe?" There is another far more vital, "How much moral and spiritual significance does it have for us?" Our most needed instrument is not the telescope by which we see the distant stars, but faith by which we look into the face of an ever-present and eternally loving God. It is not the light year by which scientists measure stellar spaces, but the light within our own souls that determines the size of the universe in which we live.

The world stands out on either side
No wider than the heart is wide;
Above the world is stretched the sky—
No higher than the soul is high.
The heart can push the sea and land
Farther away on either hand;
The soul can split the sky in two,
And let the face of God shine through.
But East and West will pinch the heart
That cannot keep them pushed apart;
And he whose soul is flat—the sky
Will cave in on him by and by.

Neither the life of man, nor the universe in which he lives, is to be measured by a yardstick, a test tube, or a light year. God's measuring rod is the spiritual instrument which reveals the depth of our faith, the breadth of our love, and the height of our ideals.

VERSE

Not What, But Whom

NOT what, but Whom, I do believe!
That, in my darkest hour of need,
Hath comfort that no mortal creed
To mortal man may give.
Not what, but Whom!
For Christ is more than all the creeds,
And his full life of gentle deeds
Shall all the creeds outlive.
Not what do I believe, but Whom!
Who walks beside me in the gloom?
Who shares the burden wearisome?
Who all the dim way doth illume,
And bids me look beyond the tomb
The larger life to live?
Not what do I believe, but whom!
Not what, but Whom!

JOHN OXENHAM.

Alone God Sufficeth

LET nothing disturb thee,
Nothing affright thee;
All things are passing;
God never changeth;
Patient endurance
Attaineth to all things;
Who God possesseth
In nothing is wanting;
Alone God sufficeth.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

THE second annual meeting of the National Council of Federated Church Women was held in Chicago in June. This is a new organization, and it encounters the general prejudice—which I also share—against multiplying organizations. But the need of a new movement among the women of our churches is so great and, to me at least, so obvious that I cannot do otherwise than hail with enthusiasm the attempt of Mrs. John Ferguson, president, and Mrs. Josephine M. Stearns, general secretary, and their colleagues, to meet it. The purpose underlying the new organization is to provide "a medium through which the Protestant womanhood of the nation may speak with one voice and bring the impact of united influence and effort to bear wherever sacred interests are involved or human welfare imperiled." The only question is whether the movement gets down close enough to the women in the local churches. Its lowest unit appears to be those interdenominational groups—missionary, social service or civic—which exist in any local community. But this is not going deep enough. If I were a pastor again, I am sure I would undertake completely to construct the organization of the women of my congregation. The Ladies' Aid society and the Woman's Missionary society do not begin to express the range of interests which belong to modern religion. And there is ample reason for the women of the local church to embody their interests in an organization of their own. Perhaps the present movement will gradually extend its function to include the women of the local churches.

The Book of the Month

THE CHURCH IN POLITICS, *by Stanley High. Harper and Brothers,* $2.00.

THERE is just now a concerted attack upon the church on account of its participation in political and social affairs. Mr. High defends the church against its accusers by showing that it always has been in politics, that the very nature of ethical religion allows no alternative, and that the present outcry is due not to any solicitude either for the church on one hand or the state on the other, but to the fact that her critics do not like the specific things the church stands for. The political activity of the modern Protestant church is distinguished from its activity in certain other periods of Christian history in that the modern church is not in politics for its own aggrandizement but for unselfish moral ideals. This activity "cannot be abridged in a democracy without abridging the workings of democracy itself." Mr. High insists that the so-called "social gospel" is no new thing, but is in reality the "good old gospel." He devotes several chapters to a historical interpretation of religion, from the days of the prophets to the reformation, showing that when religion was most vital it was most active in secular affairs, and when it withdrew from public affairs it was decadent. I know of no better book dealing with the current issue which the church is facing. Certain questions are not touched upon; the chief of which, as I see it, is the development of a technique of social and political action which will preserve to the church its unique genius as a church, and save it from becoming merely another party among many rival parties. But that in itself is a sufficient subject for another book.

A Thought for the Month

RELIGION is our way of reacting to things that are inexorable. If life presented itself to us only in forms which our will could freely mould and change, escape or destroy, there would be morality, perhaps, but no religion. But life does not so present itself. Instead, the larger aspect of our experience consists in taking things as they are, in making our adjustment to life's inexorables. We are like a passenger on an ocean steamship. We are free to walk about the deck, to sit in our chair, to read, to play the deck games, to eat (perhaps!), to remain in our stateroom. But we have nothing to say as to the ship's course, or the activities of the crew, or the operating of the engines, or the wind and sun and wave. These all are facts outside our ordering and only to be accepted for what they are. It is so with life. We find ourselves thrust into a world which is already a going concern. We are part of a cosmic order with whose major events, so far as we can see, we have no determining relationship. Life itself is one of these: we had nothing to say about our being born. Sorrow and disappointment come to us all. Inevitable temptation meets us at every turn. Struggle and grim duty are mixed with all our happinesses. Sin appears to be our common lot. Age creeps silently but inevitably on. And death stands at the end of the road to enfold us all in his inexorable embrace. What shall be our attitude toward these inexorables, these *given* factors in all our experience? Our answer will be, our religion. All religions have their distinction in the kind of answers they tell men to give to the inexorables of life. We who have heard the story of Christ's vast and unfailing trust in the Inexorable as the manifestation of a Father's will, believe that he opened up a way for us all to live in fruitful harmony with the supreme Reality, and we humbly follow in his steps.

Charles Clayton Morrison

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